

Patent Application of
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for

TITLE: APPOINTMENT PERIOD CALENDAR and REMINDER

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

Not applicable.

BACKGROUND - FIELD OF INVENTION:

This invention relates to calendars used for advertisement and appointment reminder purposes.

BACKGROUND - DESCRIPTION OF PRIOR ART

Calendars of normal periods, i.e. full years or months, are commonly printed upon printable media sheets or cards which sometimes include advertisements, contact information of some seller of goods or services, and such calendar period may be printed upon a single sheet or upon a group of such sheets padded so as to have contiguous pages reflect adjoining periods.

Generally speaking such calendars are not patentable per se because the printed calendar in common use, reflecting all the dates in a given month or full year, is commonly known and such calendars have been printed for centuries. A distinction is made for inventions which attempt to provide means of: (a) assembling "perpetual calendars", e.g.

U.S. Patent no 5799423 to Malino, (b) combination card and calendar patents, e.g. U.S. patents no. 2128989, 2228517, and 3605306 issued to Dickerson, Hawkins, and Diambra respectively are utility patents with structures that all include folding of all of the parts (card, advertising area, and calendar) along parallel lines, (c) business appointment calendars such as reflected in U.S. Patent 5697647 which involves a standard calendar year and removable appointment reminders to be given the customer, in which there is no provision for advertising information from other than the provider of the service nor for giving the customer any calendar of any type, (d) magnetically mounted postcards which may be imprinted with calendars or an appointment reminder such as is included under U.S. Patent no. 5983537 to Johnson, and calendars showing normal monthly periods but in a holder which "improves" the utility of it as is reflected in Patent No. 6138391 to Lung.

In none of the patents found, nor in an informal search of the market, has there been found any embodiment of a calendar period limited to a "normal appointment period". A "normal appointment period" is one that will always commence with the "current period" and which ends after a period slightly longer than the time recommended by the applicable business type for customers to return for a like service. "Current period" is defined for use herein as that month or week in which the printed material containing the calendar period depicted is intended to be distributed to members of the consuming public. As an illustration but not by way of limitation to a given period or type of business, the recommendation of dentists that people commonly return in six months for another cleaning of the teeth would result in a calendar period totaling seven months commencing with the "current period". Hereinafter the period commonly used in a given industry for performance of essentially the same service on a repeat basis will sometimes

be called a "normal appointment period".

The common printed calendar has date information far in excess of that needed to reflect most "normal appointment periods". Prior months obviously serve no further functional use to the consumer or the business providing the service, being past. By reflection of a number of months or weeks beyond a "normal appointment period" the common calendar does not highlight the end of the time normally suggested for the customer to return for like services. By limiting the calendar period reflected to the applicable "normal appointment period" the end of that period and the need for an appointment will be highlighted. Reflecting only a "normal appointment period" instead of the usual 12 month fiscal or normal calendar often leaves a greater proportion of the total space available for use for advertising and for information pertaining to the provider of the services involved.

Flexible magnetic sheets, or portions thereof, have been adhesively affixed to the back of various items to enable removable attachment of such items to home appliances for many years. In the magnetically mounted postcards included in U.S. Patent no. 5983537 such magnetic strips are incorporated into the "cards" by placing same between two strata composed either of two truly distinct strata or one strata folded so as to utilize one folded section as though it were a separate strata for purposes of the placement of such a magnet or magnets between two strata. In the invention claimed herein, when a magnet or a plurality of magnets is adhesively attached to a sheet of material on which is imprinted a "normal appointment period" calendar, only one strata touches the magnetic unit which is attached to the surface not depicting the said calendar thereby reducing the weight and the cost of production involved with magnetized calendars.

Appointment reminders are often provided by many businesses and have printed upon them the data pertaining to the identity and contact information pertinent to the business as well as a place for insertion of the date and time of the next appointment. Business appointment calendars such as reflected in U.S. Patent 5697647 which involves two parts, one including a standard calendar year and the other part being removable appointment reminders to be given the customer, in which there is no provision for advertising information from other than the provider of the service nor for giving the customer any calendar of any type. No such appointment reminder is known to contain thereon a "normal appointment period" calendar as is contemplated herein. Neither do they provide space on which to place ads to targeted consumers, e.g. dental patients, which ads are given to such consumers by the entity providing service to such consumers, e.g. dentist, on a printed reminder which will ordinarily be kept and looked at a number of times and which implies that the service provider endorses the advertised products. This latter advantage is expected to serve as inducement to manufacturers to provide free appointment reminders of the type described herein to the service providers in the applicable industry.

SUMMARY:

This invention relates to the improvement of printed appointment reminders by including thereon a calendar period thereon limited to a period hereinafter called the "normal appointment period". Said "normal appointment period" will always commence with the "current period" i.e. the week or month, depending upon the type of service involved, in which the reminder is intended to be distributed, and continue through an additional time period, day, week or, at most, one calendar month, beyond the "normal

service cycle" in the given industry in which the given embodiment of the calendar and reminder is intended to be distributed. Unlike most normal calendars the "normal appointment period" may extend into a subsequent year but will never be for a standard twelve month period. "Normal service cycle" is defined to be the number of weeks or months between services of a type generally repeated in a given industry, e.g. teeth cleaning, hair dressing, auto lubrication, which services are given by way of illustration and not of limitation. The "normal appointment period" is thus a variable period as to the length thereof and can be modified to best suit the industry for which the appointment reminder card is prepared, e.g. seven months for dental appointments, seven weeks for beauty salon appointments or as members of such industry may suggest. By way of illustration but not limitation, assuming that dentists commonly recommend that a person return within, or shortly after, six months from the date his teeth are cleaned for the same service, the "appointment period" of the calendar distributed in April would commence with April 1 and could continue through October 31 by when the next appointment should have been made, while a calendar distributed in October, perhaps to the same customer, would extend from October 1 through April 30 of the subsequent year. A calendar designed for beauticians could commence with the current week and continue for a seven week period assuming that period reflected the time commonly used by beauticians for setting appointments for a repeated service such as a "styling". Herein the uniquely designed period described in the prior sentence will sometimes be called a "normal appointment period". By coincidence, the "normal appointment period" may sometimes begin or end with the same date as a common calendar depicting a single month or a full twelve month period. As with most appointment reminders it will include spaces for

information about the provider of services to the consumer and insertion of an appointment date and time.

The limitation of the depicted calendar period to the "normal appointment period" may be of special utility to advertisers who wish to track the response to their advertisements since they can purchase advertisements solely for a given "normal appointment period". Further, it has the advantage to the printer of creating a product which must be produced for each "normal appointment period" e.g. commencing with each month of the year for use by consumer service providers such as dentists and perhaps commencing with each week for use of consumer service providers such as beauticians. A further advantage to advertisers purchasing space on such printed "normal appointment period" calendars is that their advertisement is targeted to the special group of consumers to whom such combination "normal appointment period" calendar and appointment reminder are given by the service provider selected by such consumers.

The lapse of the calendar period depicted on such an appointment reminder concurrent with or shortly after the time set for an appointment within the "normal appointment period" will provide an additional reminder to the consumer of the need for calling for an appointment if the designated time set has been missed and a further incentive to the consumer to meet an appointment, i.e. to obtain printed material depicting calendar information beyond the termination of the "normal appointment period" calendar information contained on the lapsed appointment reminder.

Any printed material embodying one of the unique calendar periods envisioned herein could have one or more flexible magnetic devices attached to the back surface of the printed material to facilitate removable mounting to home appliances, automobiles, or any

other surface to which magnets will adhere. Where such magnetic devices are incorporated with the printed sheet containing an appropriate "appointment period calendar", an appointment reminder and contact information pertaining to the provider of the service involved, and an advertisement, the provider and the advertiser will obtain a direct market advertisement which is seen on a repeated basis when the unit is removably affixed to an appliance or other surface to which magnets will adhere and the consumer will be provided with a reminder to meet or obtain an appointment or otherwise arrange for a service to be provided within the "normal appointment period" depicted within the "appointment period calendar".

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